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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/619,605	07/16/2003	Mitsuyoshi Watanabe	1614.1345	6534
21171	7590	03/07/2007	EXAMINER	
STAAS & HALSEY LLP SUITE 700 1201 NEW YORK AVENUE, N.W. WASHINGTON, DC 20005			BASIT, ABDUL	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3694	
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
3 MONTHS		03/07/2007	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/619,605	WATANABE ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Abdul Basit	3694

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 July 2003.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948).
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 7/16/2003.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

2. Claims 1, 7, 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Dodd (US Pat. App. No. US 2003/0036978).

Regarding claim 1, 7, 8 and 9:

Dodd teaches a sales support information providing method that includes:

- Transmitting an answer request to salesperson terminals, the answer request requesting each terminal to input an answer choice to the selling method contained in the request. (see ¶ 6- ¶ 9 and figure 1).
- Receiving answer data from the terminals, the answer data of each terminal containing an answer choice input by one of the salespersons for the selling method. (see ¶ 6- ¶ 9 and figure 1).
- Storing the respective answer data corresponding to the salespersons cumulatively as an answer file, the answer file containing records which correspond to the answer data of the salespersons respectively. (see ¶ 6- ¶ 9 and figure 1).
- Extracting each record from the answer file to increment

each of total counts for one or more of predetermined attributes which are met by a corresponding one of the salespersons for the extracted record. (see ¶ 6- ¶ 9 and figure 2).

- transmitting results of the total counts for said one or more of the predetermined attributes to the salesperson terminals which are related to the selling method. (see ¶ 6- ¶ 9 and figure 1).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 2, 3 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dodd in view of Lu et al. (US Pat. No. 5,331,544).

Regarding claim 4:

Lu teaches a sales support information providing method where one or more of the predetermined attributes include shop attributes of shops which the salespersons belong to. (see column 3, lines 6-10).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Dodd with Lu. Motivation to modify exists because shop attributes enhance the sales support system.

Regarding claim 3:

Lu teaches a sales support information providing method

according to claim 1 where one or more of the predetermined attributes include customer attributes of customers which the salespersons are responsible to. (see *column 3, lines 6-10*).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Dodd with Lu. Motivation to modify exists because customer attributes enhance the sales support system.

Regarding claim 4:

Lu teaches a sales support information providing method where one or more of the predetermined attributes include salesperson attributes of the salespersons. (see *column 3, lines 6-10*).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Dodd with Lu. Motivation to modify exists because salesperson attributes enhance the sales support system.

5. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dodd in view of Johnson (US Pat. No. 6,067,525).

Regarding claim 5:

Johnson teaches a sales support information providing method where the answer request contains a questionnaire of the selling method. (see *column 22, lines 55-65*).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Dodd with Johnson. Motivation to modify exists because a questionnaire is an efficient method of obtaining information.

6. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dodd in view of Johnson and in further view of Carol B. MacKnight's article, Teaching critical thinking through online discussions (Educate Quarterly, Number 4, 2000).

Regarding claim 6:

MacKnight teaches a sales support information providing method where the questionnaire is generated by including a selected one of success cases, sent from the salespersons to a bulletin board, and a set of answer choices. (see pages 38-39).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to further modify Dodd with MacKnight. Motivation to modify exists because a questionnaire generated by success cases helps to provide a better way to predict which salespeople are succeeding or failing.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Abdul Basit whose telephone number is 571 272-7246. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 8:30am to 5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Trammell can be reached on 571 272 6712. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

aqb

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